

May 2008
NASDSE Conference
Presenter Biographies

**Moving From High School to Post-school Opportunities: Transition
Components and Strategies for High School Redesign**

Presenters:

Bill East, Executive Director, National Association of State Directors of Special Education

Carl Suter, Executive Director, Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation

Carolyn Roman, Young Adult Advocate

Bill East, Ed.D. has more than 38 years experience in the fields of education and mental health. He has been a high school teacher, a supervisor in the Alabama mental health system, an adjunct college professor and an educational specialist with the Alabama State Department of Education. Dr. East was the State Director of Special Education in Alabama from 1990-1998, and was honored by the Alabama Federation Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) as the Outstanding Special Educator in Alabama. Dr. East provides leadership for NASDSE, an organization that focuses on partnerships for assisting states to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. He joined NASDSE as the deputy executive director in 1998, and was appointed the position of executive director in 1999. During his tenure at NASDSE, Dr. East has made numerous speeches across the nation on educational policy and other related matters. Special areas of interest and emerging work include development of deaf education service guidelines and training; transition/vocational rehabilitation initiatives; students with disabilities and juvenile justice; mental health; communities of practice and Response to Intervention (RTI).

Carolyn Roman is attending Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where she is currently a senior majoring in speech-language pathology. She plans to pursue a Masters Degree in speech-language pathology. Ms. Roman has been involved since high school in various volunteer programs focusing specifically on the needs of disabled students. She has also presented on numerous panels across the country on leadership and transition issues for youth with disabilities. She understands that students with special needs often require advocates, and she hopes to make this the focus of her career.

Carl Suter is the chief executive officer of the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation. He assumed this position in November, 2001. Prior to joining CSAVR, he served as director of the Illinois Office of Rehabilitation Services for five years. He oversaw a budget of nearly \$500 million dollars that included programs such as vocational rehabilitation, a \$300 million dollar in-home care program for persons with disabilities, three schools for children with disabilities and Disability Adjudicative Services for determining eligibility for benefits for Social Security Supplemental Security Income in Illinois. During his tenure as state director, he led sweeping reforms of the Illinois Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program to provide world-class customer service to the nearly 70,000 individuals with disabilities served through its programs. Mr. Suter has also served as the executive director of the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities and as the associate director of the Illinois Association of Rehabilitation Facilities.